REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-7, 16-17, and 19-20 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 16 have been amended. No claims have been canceled and no claims have been added with this amendment. Therefore, claims 1-3, 5-7, 16, 17, 19, and 20 will remain pending in the application after entry of the foregoing claim amendments. Support for the amendments is found in the specification, drawings, and claims as originally filed. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C § 103

Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 16, 17, 19, and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable as obvious over U.S. Pub. No. 2003/0195762 (hereinafter "Gleason") in view of U.S. Pat. No. 7,124,145 (hereinafter "Surasinghe") and U.S. Pat. No. 7,174,342 (hereinafter "Scheurich"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections. Although Applicants believe that the present claims patentably define over Gleason in view of Surasinghe and Scheurich, Applicants have amended the claims to further clarify the claimed subject matter.

The cited portions of Gleason, Surasinghe and Scheurich fail to disclose or suggest the specific combination of claim 1. For example, the cited portions of Gleason, Surasinghe, and Scheurich fail to disclose or suggest that the computer constructs a query to evaluate at least one of the business rules, the query delayed within a rules runtime to allow a relevant portion of each of a plurality of files of a data set to be brought into a memory of the rules engine, the relevant portion of each of the plurality of files based upon the query, wherein the query is executed over the relevant portion of each of the plurality of files, as now recited in claim 1.

The Office Action mailed on February 3, 2010 (Office Action) acknowledges on page 6 that "Neither Gleason nor Surasinghe teaches the query generated within a rules runtime after relevant data has been determined, wherein the query is constructed and executed during execution of the workflow and is optimized to retrieve only data needed for query execution." Instead, the Office Action relies on Scheurich as disclosing this feature. See Office Action, page 6, ¶3. Although Applicants believe that the present claims patentably define over

Gleason in view of Surasinghe and Scheurich in this regard, Applicants have amended the claims to further clarify the claimed subject matter.

The cited portions of Scheurich disclose the following.

> For example, a sales manager may decide that it would be useful to see dollar sales for items sold in her territory for last month. So, she uses a query by example system to generate a list of items sold in her territory and their dollar sales for December 2000. Looking at the results, she may decide to further investigate the items having the most sales by composing additional queries or taking other action. During the decision-making process, a decision-maker may explore various possibilities and find that original assumptions were wrong and need to be adjusted.

(Scheurich, col. 2, lines 14-24).

> In one arrangement, a decision-making process is automated by selecting discrete coupleable items executable in a computer-implemented workflow environment. An executable workflow is created by coupling the items.

(Scheurich, col. 3, lines 40-44).

> The data coordinator 1352, the analysis coordinator 1362, and the delivery coordinator 1372 are exemplary processing directive coordinators in that they work in concert to execute processing directives. The system coordinator 1342 coordinates the activities of the processing directive coordinators.
>
> For example, sequences of processing directives and their scheduled times of execution can be stored in the library 1322. Based on the information in the library 1322, the system coordinator 1342 can then initiate execution of a sequence of processing directives by modifying a scheduling information in the library 1322. The data coordinator 1352 can periodically check the scheduling information to see if any sequences are to be processed by it, begin processing, and note the status of the processing.

(Scheurich, col. 17, lines 27-40).

However, a thorough reading of the cited portions of Scheurich makes clear that Scheurich discloses a scheme for developing sequences, including sequences of queries, based on a decision making process. As described in the cited portion of Scheurich at col. 2, lines 14-24, the decision-maker obtains the results of her query. Based upon the results of the

query, the decision-maker may proceed with further investigation of the data. Thus, the decision-making process in Scheurich refers to manipulation of the results of a query subsequent to obtaining those results. Uncited portions of Scheurich confirm that this is the extent of the teachings of Scheurich in this regard. (*See, e.g.,* Scheurich, col. 2, lines 24-31).

The remaining cited portions of Scheurich are directed to a sequence of operations designed to affect a decision-making process. For example, Figures 13-15, and the accompanying text, are directed to creating and scheduling a sequence of directives to effect the desired decision-making process. However, the cited portions of Scheurich fail to disclose or suggest that a query is delayed within a rules runtime to allow a relevant portion of each of a plurality of files of a data set to be brought into a memory of the rules engine, the relevant portion of each of the plurality of files based upon the query, wherein the query is executed over the relevant portion of each of the plurality of files. In contrast to Scheurich, in the claimed method the relevant portion of each of a plurality of files of a data set is brought into the memory of the rules engine prior to the results being obtained.

Thus, the cited portions of Scheurich fail to remedy the defects of Gleason and Surasinghe in this regard. In particular, the cited portions of Gleason, Surasinghe and Scheurich fail to disclose or suggest at least these features of claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 is allowable for at least the reasons noted above. Claims 2, 3, 5, and 7, depend from claim 1, which Applicants have shown to be allowable. Accordingly, claims 2, 3, 5, and 7, are also allowable, at least by virtue of their dependence from claim 1.

The subject matter of claim 1 discussed above is similarly recited in independent claim 16. Therefore, claim 16 is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claims 17, 19, and 20 depend from claim 16, which Applicants have shown to be allowable. Accordingly, claims 17, 19, and 20, are also allowable, at least by virtue of their dependence from claim 16.

Claim 6 also stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gleason, Surasinghe, and Scheurich in view of "An operational approach to the design of workflow systems" ("Agarwal"). Claim 6 depends from claim 1, which Applicants have shown to be allowable over Gleason Surasinghe, and Scheurich. Agarwal was cited in the Office Action as allegedly disclosing utilizing at least one declarative if/then statement. See Office Action, page 10, ¶ 2. Applicants respectfully submit that the cited portions of Agarwal

fail to remedy the deficiencies of Gleason, Surasinghe, and Scheurich as discussed above. Accordingly, claim 6 is also allowable, at least by virtue of its dependence from claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 6 patentably defines over Gleason, Surasinghe, Scheurich and Agarwal.

Applicants respectfully request, therefore, withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-3, 5-7, 16, 17, 19, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are allowable and that the present application is in condition for allowance. Entry of the above amendments, reconsideration of the application and a Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested. In the event that the Examiner cannot allow the present application for any reason, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney, Michael P. Dunnam, at (215) 564-8962 to discuss the resolution of any remaining issues.

Date: April 27, 2010

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